# RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

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# ON THE COVER

The scene of the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR derailment near Emerson, Iowa on June 15, as Burlington Northern crews began the cleanup job. The derailment story was reported in the last issue of RTN, and further details are given in this issue. Photo by Ed Rath, courtesy of Omaha World-Herald.

(Rear cover:) An updated version of the ad for the SPIRIT OF CALIFORNIA prepared by rail advocate George Falcon (see also RTN #241).


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# LETTERS

I just got the latest issue and I have one thing to say: KEEP THE PANIC BOX COMING. Ignore the guy at Amtrak who is cancelling his subscription. That stuff is very much the public's business. The only thing embarrassing to Amtrak would be the equipment failures you report, and they need a little embarrassing on that point. Frankly, that guy is typical of what I'm seeing more and more of at Amtrak ... the idea some of the employees and bureaucrats have that they know it all and Amtrak is their private little train running club, and everyone else should butt out. Maybe a little budget insecurity was good for them.

Name withheld.

I find the Panic Box items most informative, and cannot agree with the unnamed Amtraker from Washington DC who feels it is privileged items... how else can a non-employee judge if the "heard-of problems" are really Amtrak or the partial (freight) lines at work again?

David A. Moeller
North Hollywood, California

In RTN 245 an Amtrak employee wrote to say that the material reported in The Panic Box is of no business to anyone outside of Amtrak. One item in this issue's column reports passengers being bused from Tucson to Dallas because of a derailment. If I'm going to pay out at least double the air fare for sleeping car accommodations, I consider the possibility of this happening to me to be very much my business. (Each issue the Panic Box has reported at least one, often several, incidents of "forced busing".) The nameless employee reminds me of a conductor on the Penn Central before Amtrak, and he probably regards passengers as a nuisance rather than the source of his paycheck.

Thomas E. Hoffman, Jr.
Washington, D.C.

As long as you and I pay taxes it is everyone's business about Amtrak! We need to be kept abreast of all the uncoordinated directions Amtrak goes. As an example, note the letter from James A. McClellan (RTN 245) where he reports that Amtrak employees seem to have their own private lounge... The public needs this information so that we can see what they are doing with our money. Seems to me they need some help.

J. L. Oates,
Brandon, Florida

I have been reading RTN since about issue 100 and find your magazine an excellent publication that has built credibility. I think that the use of "The Panic Box" seriously threatens that credibility when you turn to sensationalism type of editorial format.

As to the writer who enjoys it because he's a detour buff, what good does it do him, as the detour has already taken place weeks before.

I sincerely hope that you do away with this piece of garbage. If need be, print a smaller magazine or offer more articles, especially business and financial information. This may be boring to the average fan, but if it were not for the business side of railroading, there would be no railroading.

Gilman Angier, Jr.
South Portland, Maine

NARP's Fifteenth Birthday article in RTN 245 should have made mention of the names of Otto Janssen, Joe Zucker and Peter Lyon as founders of NARP.

Before NARP's inception, Mr. Janssen along with Ken Reeves, started the AMERICANS FOR PRESERVATION OF RAIL OPERATIONS. Unfortunately, APRO was short-lived. Early in 1967, Mr. Janssen spotted an account in the NY Times which reported a one-man crusade against rail passenger service abandonments, of which Anthony Haswell was the crusader. Mr. Janssen made contact with Haswell and made arrangements for a meeting with Peter Lyon (author of "To Hell in a Daycoach") and Joe Zucker

at the Hotel Plaza in New York City. Mr. Janssen is Senior Editor at PTJ and was Director of Public Relations at NARP.

Henry DiVenuto
Macon, Georgia

Much will be said about safety aspects concerning the tragic fire on Amtrak's COAST STARLIGHT. As one who is allergic to many things, including tobacco, I'd like to urge that smoking be prohibited in sleeping cars. All passengers and train crew who wish to smoke should go to the car or cars designated for that purpose.

The problem in sleepers is that much of the air is recycled. I've been in the upper berth of a Superliner sleeper practically under the ventilator. Some chain smoker somewhere else in the car decided to be "Old Faithful," with the result that about every 20minutes a puff of tobacco smoke would belch forth from the ventilator.

You say enforcement would be difficult in a private-room sleeper? Why not a smoke alarm in each room, including the rest rooms. If anyone would light up, the bell inside and outside the particular room should point out the culprit.

Smokers have their rights, yes--in the cars designated for smoking. But it is not fair for just one smoker to ruin the atmosphere of a lot of other people in a sleeping car.

Richard E. Brown
Pico Rivera, California

I was surprised to see in RTN a few issues ago the rumor that Amtrak might be planning to send the Portland section of the EMPIRE BUILDER (the one with the lounge) to Seattle and send the Seattle section (the one with the diner) to Portland because business to and from Portland is better.

I doubt this rumor since there is no commissary at Portland. And I'm told that as it is now the Portland BUILDER must be stocked with supplies sent south from Seattle every day on the PIONEER. Unfortunately, under the circumstances the switch would be appropriate. Amtrak's senseless, stupid, whim-of-the-moment re-routing of the Seattle section to the ex-GN Wenatchee line has predictably emptied the train in our state and has wrecked God-knows-how-much ridership potential by eliminating the Seattle-Yakima-Pasco trade, much of which sat in traffic jams up to 50 miles long on Snoqualmie Pass this past holiday season or rode Greyhounds in up to five sections. As long as the Seattle BUILDER continues to carry between 20 and 40 on board all the way across Washington State most of the year, much of that in the form of deadheading BN freight train crews, it would be prudent for Amtrak to run as low-cost an operation as possible.

And let's put those reports of 50% ridership increases in perspective. That's due to the added Portland market and the daily service Twin Cities-Chicago. The train has been generally weak west of the Twin Cities and mostly empty Spokane to Seattle. Train miles are up probably close to 100%, much of that because the Seattle section, rather than staying with the Portland train as far as Pasco, is having to run 76 extra miles all the way from Spokane to Seattle by itself. I just hope the BUILDER makes ridership criteria this year. Texans, you have every right to scream about the BUILDER being daily year-round west of the Twin Cities when your potential-laden trains are still stuck on tri-weekly service.

Some of us are trying to get something done about the Wenatchee re-routing. We had hoped Amtrak would have admitted its mistake by now and would be planning a return to the Yakima line this fall. But every indication is that Amtrak's Washington bureaucracy intends to defend this disaster to the VERY LAST MAN.

And Amtrak's stories about the route change helping connections in Chicago and saving equipment are absolute nonsense. Most of the sixth set of equipment they said they would save is right here in Seattle, saving them from the late eastbound departures caused by occasional late westbound arrivals we had predicted.

I really wish I didn't feel compelled to keep carping about a route change all the time, but this one was so needless and has done so much damage to both the BUILDER and our east-west service out here. If our problem accomplishes nothing else, I hope it jars some of us out of our deregulation fog and forces the realization that if Amtrak continues to have carte blanche to change existing routes,



to withdraw arbitrarily from areas already served, there'll be more Wenatchee re-routings and more helpless victims like Yakima. And passenger train service as a whole is going to suffer from it. I see the whole problem in Washington State as the first major manifestation of a growing public-be-damned attitude at Amtrak.

Rocky Shay
Auburn, Washington

## THREE DIE IN TWO AMTRAK DISASTERS

This report covers the June 15 derailment of the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR (reported last issue) and a fire on the southbound COAST STARLIGHT on June 23.

Regarding the derailment, we have received the following letter from reader Ronald Dirksen of Los Angeles:

"I got a first-hand report on it by phone from my grandfather who was on his way back to California from Aurora IL. He called from the hospital in Red Oak IA to say that he was okay except for cuts on his hands from going thru a broken window after the train stopped. He said it was raining hard in Eastern Iowa all day, and there had been flash flood warnings out for all of Western Iowa all day and night. He was in the second coach behind the engines, and a retired CNW conductor who used to work the CITY trains was sitting next to him. He said left Creston about 10minutes late, and it was raining very hard. They heard a report on a kid's AM radio that some roads were washed out west of Creston, and the forecast was for heavy thunderstorms until 6:00 the next morning. A BN trainman also said some branch lines were washed out in the area.

"He said that about 30 minutes after they left Creston they were in the middle of a raging thunderstorm, and the ex-CNY conductor said to him, 'I think they're damn crazy for running this train at 76mph in this stuff and at night too! I hope to God they have some maintenance of way people out watching the low spots along this line tonight.' The BN conductor came by about then and they asked him why the train was going so fast under those conditions. He said, 'Unless we get orders otherwise, it's maximum speed, come snow, rain, wind or fire.' The CNW man turned to my grandfather and said, 'I always did hear about how crazy some things are done on their outfit (the BN), but this is crazy, what they're doing here at this speed with all this rain.' The CNW man then walked back to the lounge car to be with his wife.

"About 30 minutes later my grandfather looked out the window, and thru the sheets of rain could see water right up to the roadbed by the lights from the train windows. He said he thought "My God, we're going to need a rowboat out here.'

"Then it happened. He said he felt a lurch forward, heard a roar, then the lights went out, then the car started going up and down like a ping pong ball, and there was a lot of screaming, and objects were flying all over the car. He grabbed a pillow and dove for the floor, and said something hit him in the back just as he went down. He said the noise of it sounded like the world coming to an end. The car rocked very badly, then slowed down as it bumped along the ties. Then just before it stopped, there was a sharp jerk to the left side as the car to the rear hit his car, then the car went over on its side. He held onto his seat and was on the upward side of the car.

"There was panic when water began coming in all over. Then a porter came back with a flashlight, and he and the porter kicked out three windows and began getting people out the top side of the car. The thunder claps and hard rain made it very hard to hear, and there were people thrown all over the car. Outside help didn't get there until about a half hour after the wreck, and it was then that the rain let up. The firemen had to use boats to get to the last three cars, and the rest came in on foot.

"He said daylight came about 5:00am, and then they saw how bad it was. Many of the passengers, as well as he, didn't understand why the train was doing 76mph in the middle of a raging thunderstorm in total darkness, and despite the fact that there had been warnings all day about flash floods and washouts.

"He ran into the CNW man at the Red Oak Hospital, and the CNW man was on the phone to his lawyer, and was extremely angry, as his wife had a broken leg and bad cuts. He said he was going to make sure the National Transportation Safety Board knew the whole story about BN's reckless speed in that rainstorm, and intended to sue them as soon as possible. He also said he had been on train 6 last April and they were about 10 miles east of Creston IA, and the fog was so thick that a person could see only about 100 yards, yet the train was doing about 70mph, and the BN has no cab signals there. He said that was just as crazy as whey they did on the 15th in the rainstorm.

"My grandfather saw the BN conductor in town and asked him what he thought about it. Again, he said, 'They didn't say anything about high water, slow orders or anything else when we left Creston, and there was nobody out to check the track anywhere on that subdivision despite the weather and road washouts.' That was the last my grandfather spoke with any of the crew on No. 5."

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Newspaper reports indicated that the BN checks on the weather only once every six hours. The last report before the fatal derailment was at midnight. At 12:55am, however, a flash flood report was issued (the derailment was at 3:18am).

An Amtrak report indicated the following equipment conditions and damage estimates: engine 371 (turned 180° and on top of engine 332 & car 1177), $750,000; engine 332 (on side), $500,000; baggage car 1177 (on side), $400,000; baggage car 1220 (jacknifed with 3 previous units), $120,000; (following all upright & leaning at 45° angle:) Hi-level coach-dorm 39912, $120,000; Superliner sleeper 32021, $120,000; slpr 32019, $120,000; Sightseer lounge 38006, $120,000; diner 33018, $60,000; (following all upright but leaning:) coach-baggage 31037, $30,000; coach 34024, $30,000; coach 34079, $25,000; coach-baggage 31000, $15,000; (upright, lead trucks derailed:) slpr 32004, $5,000. Total Amtrak equipment damage: $2,415,000. About 1500 feet of track was torn up on both main tracks.

One passenger drowned in the wreck, a 19-year old woman from Santa Maria CA (an earlier report indicated Santa Monica) who was traveling with her mother and her 1-year old daughter. Amtrak said there were 23 injuries--19 passengers, one BN crew member and 3 Amtrak employees.

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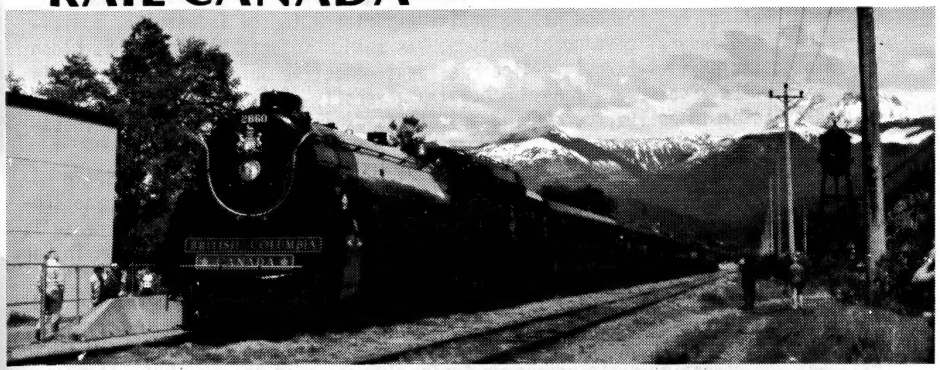
The southbound COAST STARLIGHT, train 11 of Jun 22, was stopped at Gibson CA, 18 miles south of Dunsmuir at 1:35am on Jun 23 when a fire started in Superliner sleeper 32010. Two elderly passengers died as a result of the fire and about 55 to 60 others were treated for smoke inhalation. A Los Angeles woman in the upper level of car 32010 died of burns, and an Idaho man in a wheelchair, semi-handicapped, died of smoke inhalation on the upper level of adjoining sleeper 32039. Damage to Superliner equipment was as follows: car 32010, totally destroyed, $1,200,000; slpr 32039, heat and soot damage, $92,300; diner 38025, heavy heat and soot damage and broken windows, $85,100; Sightseer lounge 33020, smoke and soot damage, $125,000.

Initially the fire was believed to have started from electrical problems in the sleeper, but as investigations got underway later, electrical malfunctions were ruled out. Then arson was considered, as there had been a stowaway on the train who got off at Gibson and who had boarded at some unknown point south of Portland. Finally, the investigation settled on a smouldering cigarette in a room of sleeper 32010, apparently in a deluxe bedroom. The room in question had been used about 3 hours earlier for an "informal meeting" of two Amtrak personnel and two railroad personnel. Most likely, a cigarette was left smouldering in a mattress. The press reported in early July that the conductor of the train had been found intoxicated, and had been seen drinking on the job, in violation of railroad


(continued on page 20)

# RAIL CANADA



ROYAL HUDSON LOCOMOTIVE'S first day of operation this season, May 19, is pictured above in photo at Squamish, B.C., by Gene Hines. The 9-car excursion train on the British Columbia Railway was reported busy.

VIA'S MODIFIED MEAL SERVICE by Duane W. Roller

On April 15 VIA inaugurated a reduced menu on the OCEAN. I had a chance to try it on a trip late in the same month. A flyer distributed by VIA emphasizes totally the reduced price of the new service, which seems misdirected, since the train carries a cafe car which offers sit-down meals at a lesser price than the modified diner, and those seeking cheap meals will already be eating in the cafe, not in the regular diner. But emphasizing the price reduction is probably the only positive attitude VIA can take.

The service offers a stock breakfast and choice of lunch and dinner entrees (two at each meal), as described earlier in RTN. China and silverware continue to be used, altho the glassware is plastic. Passengers are given a card menu as they are seated, and the steward issues a meal check with (at lunch and dinner) either choice 1 or choice 2 indicated. On one car the steward requested payment at that time, a la Amtrak; on the other, payment was in the normal fashion after the meal.

The diner staff was at five: two in the kitchen, two waiters, and the steward. The service is quick and efficient: at breakfast the plates of scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, and potatoes are made up in assembly-line fashion and appear almost as one is seated. The eggs are powdered and were universally condemned by the patrons. Other meals seem more conventionally prepared.

Passenger complaints on the two trains I rode were frequent and lengthy. Most indicated that they were willing to pay higher prices for better variety and quality. The eggs and lack of hot breads (only a roll basket) at breakfast were criticized the most. And the diners were practically empty, despite the passenger count of over 300 (only 12 people at 7:30am for breakfast, for example). In fact, a few days later I was on the CANADIAN carrying fewer than 200 passengers, yet the diners, with the full meal service, were invariably full.

Still there is no doubt that the food is far above that available on Amtrak, and the ambiance is certainly superior, with the continued use of tablecloths, china and silver. And there is VIA's high standard of on-board service which makes the situation bearable. Given a choice between modified meals a la Amtrak or a la VIA, VIA is way ahead at present.

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THE NEW PRESIDENT of VIA Rail Canada, effective July 1, is Pierre Franche. He will assume the double title of President and Chief Executive Officer on Nov 1.

The present Chairman and CEO, Frank Roberts, retires Oct 31. VIA made the announcement of the new selection in late June. Franche, before coming to VIA, was Chairman of the National Harbours Board. A graduate of McGill University in chemical engineering, Mr. Franche has extensive experience in the industrial, municigovernment and federal government sectors, VIA said. Roberts also named B. Eldon Horsman to the post of Executive Vice President effective July 1. Mr. Horsman is currently VIA's VP of Operations. A McGill University civil engineering graduate, he has an in-depth railway background as well as experience in the private industrial sector.

A COST INCREASE of about $67 million may be shown by VIA this year, despite efforts by the government to cut costs. The 20% rail cutback last November was supposed to reduce VIA's expenditures by $45 million. The reason for the increase is not altogether clear, tho it probably is related to the deepening recession in Canada. In addition to the $67 million increase in costs, VIA owes $30 million in severance pay to the employees dropped in the Nov 1981 cuts, and also owes CN and CP Rail $150 million for "cost adjustments" for the last three years of operations. VIA has no control nor effective auditing procedures over the costs demanded by the railways for operating VIA's passenger trains. Because of these unfavorable financial projections, many believe that the federal government will try for a new round of passenger train cuts similar to those instituted last fall. Transport Minister Jean-Luc Pepin reportedly has stated under questioning that no cuts are planned, but has also refused to deny that further cuts will be made or that public hearings will be again avoided in the event of more cutbacks.

ELIMINATING TRAINS DOESN'T reduce costs: An American public transport specialist, Mr. John De Lora, holds that VIA is erring badly in its attempts to economize. Testifying before the Senate Committee on Transport, Mr. De Lora, Director of the Michigan Passenger Foundation, explained that it is not in reducing services to passengers that VIA Rail can make savings. The reductions announced last year will not produce savings of even half the intended amount. He said VIA will continue to lose large amounts of money because of the "ridiculous" methods of payment between VIA, CN and CP. Instead of signing firm contracts with those railways, VIA gets bills every month for anticipated expenses. VIA gets new bills at the end of the year and still others at the final reckoning. The general charges are too high, said Mr. De Lora, and in addition VIA's services should be expanded to reduce the general charges as a portion of expenses (i.e., since the fixed costs are high, the spending on marginal costs might as well be raised in order to get value for money spent).

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MONTREAL-SHERBROOKE TRAIN will have its last run on Sep 6. On May 21 Transport 2000, with the support of the Eastern Township Regional Development Council and the Quebec Minister of Transport, Mr. Michel Clair, met with Transport Minister Pepin and presented a plan for a 1-year experimental service. Mr. Pepin rejected the idea. Mr. Clair was very upset with the federal government.

THE DISCOVERY TRAIN, the 18-car train built for the U.S. Bicentennial and later sold to Canada for the national Discovery Train tour to promote national unity, is up for sale. After touring the country for three summers, it was taken out of service two years ago. Canada had purchased it for $575,000 and refurbished it.

THE EDMONTON JOURNAL on Jun 1 editorialized "Bring back the trains." The article discussed the lost tourist income because of the elimination of the SUPER CONTINENTAL last fall. Said the paper: "Jasper businesses and residents will suffer. Tourists will suffer. Northern Alberta citizens will suffer. And, come next election, Mr. Pepin will suffer too."

VIA'S SYSTEM TIMETABLEfor Jun 1-Oct 30 has been improved somewhat, being more helpful and readable. Type face is larger and heavier; table of sample fares and page of car diagrams are printed. It is four pages longer than the previous (Nov 15, 1981-Apr 24, 1982) system timetable. Color cover shows an LRC train.



# URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

## THE STATE OF METRORAIL

When in March, 1978 Dade County (Florida) voters decided to raise property taxes to construct a rapid transit system, they didn't count on ending up with a stripped-down version of the system promised, and a budget overrun of $111 million. The overrun was mostly due to planning problems by Metrorail budget planners and system designers and coordinators. To qualify for federal subsidies, the budget had to assume an inflation rate of 7%. But inflation rates proved to be 12-15%, adding $80 million to expected costs. Waste in the real estate office amounted to an estimated $1 million. Design changes in landscaping, cars and track, many of which ironically were introduced to cut costs, added another $5 million. County officials also blame their engineering consultants, Kaiser Transit Group, for costly repairs on faulty components and poor scheduling, which has already contributed $520,000 to the overrun.

By cutting back the system, Dade county transit coordinator Warren Higgins says (reports the Miami Herald) they didn't break any promises. Officials had proposed "a system to transport 211,000 passengers daily along a 21-mile, 20-station system. That system is now under construction." However, these things, along with 3-minute headways, are practically the only things that haven't been changed. There will be 14 fewer cars than planned--cars identical to those of the Baltimore system due to begin operating 6 months before Metrorail. Of the 136 cars now planned, 10-16 may be dropped, leaving the system with either fewer spare cars or longer intervals between trains. The multi-level parking garages have become surface lots with about half the spaces, and will probably discourage ridership. The proposed $1 fare may to doubled to make up for the $27 million gap between operating expenses and receipts from riders and federal subsidies.

The county is still short $51.5 million in construction funds. While asking the federal government for more money--the government has already added $12.5 million to its original 77% contribution--county officials are also pursuing other ways to meet costs. Selling bonds is one plan which has already been implemented. Leasing county land around stations to commercial entrepeneurs like parking garage developers, may also help raise money.

In spite of its troubles, Metrorail may still be the quicker and possibly cheaper transportation system for Dade county and its commuters. In 1985 Metrorail will service 46% of the transit users, as compared with 56% who will take the bus, yet it will cost 2/3 less than the buses to operate. With the $1 fare, Metrorail would be cheaper than a trip by car, and even at the $2 rate it would cost less than a day's parking. Altho a comparison with other new rail systems shows Metrorail's costs are not out of line, the necessary cutbacks caused by inflation and poor planning will result in a much smaller system than originally planned.

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CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET RESOLUTION shows $3.5 billion in mass transit funds. NARP asks rail supporters to insist on at least the same amount as this year, which is $3.7 billion, and to insist on continuing federal operating subsidies.

NEW YORK'S WESTWAY highway was blocked by a federal judge on Jun 30 who said misrepresentations had been made on the impact on Hudson River fish.

LOS ANGELES REDUCED bus fares from 85¢ to 50¢ July 1 as a result of court decision that half-cent transit tax can legally be used for transit.

SEATTLE'S ANTIQUE STREETCAR on the waterfront began operations May 29.

SAN FRANCISCO'S CABLE CARS induced a check for $12.5 million from the Feds on July 1 to help in their refurbishing; they go out of service on Sep 20 (20 mos.).

CALGARY STUDIES SHOW the LRTs are cheaper to operate than buses, are faster, and reduce air pollution.

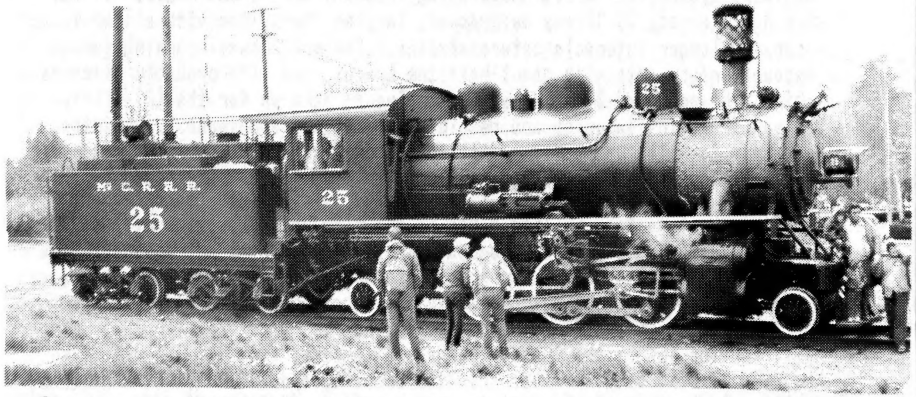
# LET'S RUN A TRAIN AROUND MT. SHASTA

by Ted and Sylvia Blishak

Imagine for a moment that you're back in high school. Your classmates are counting on a graduation trip to Disneyland, and you are chairman of the fund-raising committee. You're trying to get up some enthusiasm for arranging rummage sales and car washes, when somebody says, "Hey, why don't we sponsor a special train excursion around Mt. Shasta? We'll sell tickets for $20 apiece, and..."

Tho it sounds unlikely, that's just the scenario that began a chain of events that got a 57-year-old steam engine out of retirement, and culminated in the special run of Old Number 25 on California's McCloud River Railroad on May 8.

Student Mike Kissel, of Mt. Shasta High's Class of '82, told us that they began planning the fund-raising project when they were freshmen. At that time, Old Number 25 was stored in the back of McCloud's diesel shops. The engine hadn't been in running condition since it appeared in the 1976 movie "Bound for Glory". The standard-gauge, prairie-type logging engine, built by Alco in 1925, had been in and out of retirement since 1956. It was theonly steam engine the McCR RR had kept when they converted to diesel power (altho one of their Shay engines is on display at Railroad Park Restaurant in nearby Dunsmuir). While the Class of '82 knew they might have to settle for a diesel-hauled train, they hoped that the spectacular mountain scenery in this remote area of Northern California would be enough of a draw to make the special excursion a success.



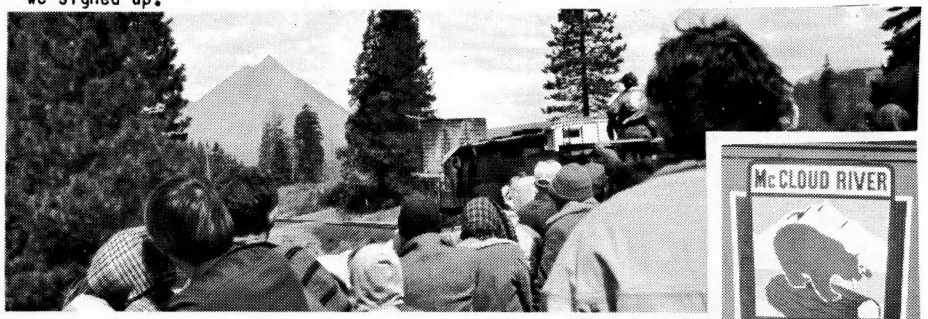

Two years ago Bill Herndon took over the presidency of the railroad. He approved of the idea of reviving Old Number 25, but was aware that a previous restoration project had become sidetracked due to heavy expenses. Then, in 1981, fate (in the form of 35-year-old Fred Kepner) intervened. Mr. Kepner had been involved in steam engine restoration in the East. The idea of restoring an engine that would run on its own tracks again--thru McCloud, the town it had helped to build--appealed to Kepner's sense of history. And he could help bring both mechanical and financial assistance to the railroad. So Kepner and his assistant, Tim Harper, approached president Bill Herndon with their offer. Herndon accepted, but warned them that the unionized McCloud employees wouldn't be able to help. "Great," replied Kepner, and the pair began a grueling 5- to 7-day a week schedule that began in July 1981 and continued until May 5, when Old Number 25 made its test runs.

Meanwhile, the Class of '82 was arranging and financing a million-dollar insurance policy for the May 8 excursion. When we asked Mike Kissel how the students managed to pay for the policy, which cost about $3,000, he told us that they had put on some steak dinners, and had also gotten some assistance from local people.



As enthusiasm grew, the Chamber of Commerce got involved, commercial artist Jack Hoffman helped out with posters, and soon the steam excursion became a community project. Mrs. Judy Herndon, the president's wife, offered to take telephone reservations for the excursion.

We learned of the event from RTN subscriber Tom Griffith. Delighted to have a second chance (since we'd foolishly said "next time" twice to the McCloud steam excursion back in the mid-70's and then realized there might be no "next time") we signed up.



View from the train as it nears water tower. (Inset:) Railroad logo on side of engine. Photos by the authors.

We arrived in McCloud early on May 8. The small town, with its large wood frame stores and hotels, looks much as it must have about 1910. The yards were full of boxcars with the railroad's unusual logo--a bear eating a fish with Mt. Shasta in the background. There were also some City of Prineville, Oregon RR boxcars, several modern snowplows, and a wood "battering ram" snowplow, built in 1914, which looked like the prow of a ship.

The 4-6-4, its cab filled with men wearing overalls, striped hats and red kerchiefs, was under steam. Passengers lined up to exchange their receipts for antique tickets printed 60 years ago, and a "McCloud McBreakfast" was served from a van parked in front of the station. The Class of '82 moved thru the crowd selling Old Number 25 T-shirts.

We held two of the 300 tickets for the 9:30am departure, which was a sellout. (The second run, scheduled for 2:30, was sold to 285 passengers.) The consist included four open SP gondola cars (furnished with wooden benches and lined with plastic sheeting), an orange caboose, and a very shiny brown diesel with red striping, pushing from the rear.

Passenger loading was complicated. The first two gondolas were loaded via wooden steps which led onto a wooden platform placed between the cars. Then the train pulled ahead, switched to the adjacent track, backed up and coupled on two more gondolas, accompanied by lots of chuffing and whistling. Then it pulled ahead, switched back to the first track next to the platform, and loaded the rest of the passengers. Then the train backed up, coupled on the caboose, and whistled off. We picked up the diesel helper in the yards.

Mt. Shasta towered above us with its massive volcanic cones still draped in deep snow. We chugged up thru the chilly, clear mountain air and into the pines and lava rockpiles. There were a few places where unpaved logging roads crossed the right-of-way; carloads of railfans were waiting with cameras and recorders.

Our engineer didn't spare the whistle, but we thought he did spare the horses and let the diesel do too much of the work. RTN subscriber Tom Griffith referred to this as a "quasi-steam excursion." We couldn't help but recall the way engineer Doyle McCormack let #4449 do the heavy work last year on the run from Oakland to Klamath Falls, only revving up the diesel in tunnels to avoid steam-cleaning soot from the roof onto the shiny steam engine. Or the sound of #6060 on its last run

(continued on page 21)

# Luxury Rides the Amex Trains

Photo captions: (above:) Dome dining lives; the dome of car "Silver Kettle" is ready for serving supper to fortunate passengers. Small tables for four are set with linen, silverware and flowers under the glass-domed roof.

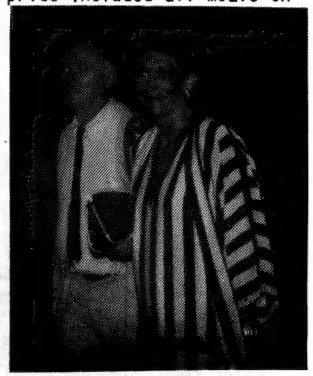
(Right:) Tail car "Silver Crescent" is ready for departure. Note reflectorized Western Pacific logo on rear of car. Car number "CZ-10", a reflection of the car's CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR background, appeared on the side of the car. After leaving the WP in 1970, the car went for several years to Jolly Rancher Candies in Wheatridge CO.

(Page 13, upper:) Mr. and Mrs. William F. Buckley, Jr. boarding the train. They were assigned to car "City of Cleveland". (Page 13, lower:) Chefs Ed Westerlund and Jason Frome prepare supper in car "Silver Kettle" before departure.



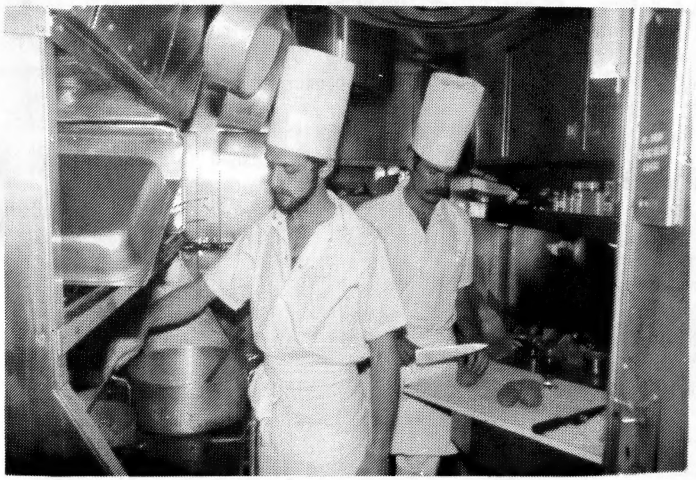
A Photo Essay - Photos by Peter Putnam Bretz

One of the American Express Company luxury transcontinental train tours, as mentioned last issue, left Los Angeles on May 23, with private cars attached to the rear of Amtrak's SUNSET LIMITED. This tour would stop for two days in Tucson and again for two days in New Orleans, before riding the rear of Amtrak's CRESCENT on to New York. The tour, operated by 20th Century Rail Tours, had a price tag of $2295 per person double occupancy. The price included all meals on board the train.



The photos here show the tour train just before departure from L.A. on May 23. Four private cars on the rear made up the special tour train. They were: "City of Cleveland", a 5-double bedroom cafe lounge owned by Rod Basich and Ed Bulmahn of Laguna Hills CA (sold by Nickel Plate RR to Amtrak in 1971 and retired in 1977; "Silver Kettle", dome dormitory-buffet-lounge owned by Al Knippert of Cincinnati (sold to Amtrak by CB&Q in 1971, retired in 1981); "Flint River", 10-6 sleeper also owned by Mr. Knippert (sold to Amtrak in 1971 by Southern Rwy, retired in 1981); and "Silver Crescent", dome observation buffet lounge with drawing room with shower and 3 bedrooms, owned by Gold Coast RR Museum in Florida (this car, retired from the Western Pacific in 1970, was shown on the cover of RTN #241).

Among the luxury touches found on the cars were bouquets of flowers placed at various locations such as the ends of cars, complimentary bathrobes for passengers, and a corsage given to each woman passenger upon boarding. Private chefs accompanied the tour, preparing deluxe meals aboard the train (in car "Silver Kettel"). There was fresh, white linen on the tables, a full range of silverware, and fresh flowers on the dining tables.



Last issue (page 18) we showed a photo of the interior of the "City of Cleveland", with tables in the cafe-lounge section set with linen, a fresh ashtray on each table, and flowers in holders between the windows. (The picture was right-left reversed in printing.)

The tour cars were serving supper upon departure from L.A., and the passengers were able to enjoy a level of railroad dining luxury available in the U.S. now only on private excursion trips.

# A LONG RIDE ON THE CARDINAL

by H. John Petersen

Chicago Union Station at 6:00 on a Sunday morning is very, very quiet. Even the Amtrak lounge is closed. I was there after taking a Greyhound from St. Paul in order to catch the CARDINAL to Washington for a week-long business meeting that would start at 1:00 on Monday. I'd had no trouble persuading the boss to let me take the train, since I would be traveling on my own time on the weekend.

For once in my life a tri-weekly train would operate on a day on which I could travel. It was scheduled to leave Chicago at 9:10am and reach Washington at 7:56 am the next morning. I had wanted a roomette (after all, I was on an expense account), but the sleeper was sold out. Incredibly, Amtrak has but one 10-6 sleeper on the train and they use three of the roomettes as dorm space, effectively making the car a 7-6 sleeper.

After 2 3/4 hours of waiting on one of the benches, the CARDINAL was called. With suitcase and briefcase in hand, I staggered out to the coach immediately ahead of the sleeper. I had ridden the CARDINAL once before, back in Sept 1977. At that time the train consisted of a baggage, two Amcoaches and an Amdinette. Today's train was much bigger. It was powered by engine 264, which was followed by a baggage car (number unrecorded), coaches 4604 and 4705, Amfleet II dinette-lounge (number unrecorded), coaches 4627, 4630, 4728, and sleeper 2920. A walk thru the train revealed about 110 adults; the next day I would count about 185.

After Peru, Indiana I pulled out a file that was needed for the next day's meeting and started to study it. It was so pleasant being able to read my file, drink a Coke and later a beer, in my travel clothes (jeans, pullover shirt, tennis shoes). I must say I got quite a bit done. The train was moving down Indiana in a steady, somewhat slow pace. It was on time and the ride was smooth.

Then we got to Richmond, and there our luck went bad. We arrived on time, left on time, but just a few minutes from the station we ground to a halt. After about ten minutes, the train crew passed thru the car announcing that there was a derailment just ahead and that we were going to have to back up to the Richmond station and try to arrange a detour. We would most likely be in Richmond for 2 or 3 hours.

So back we went, returning to Richmond at about 3pm. I spied a phone on the platform of the now-closed station and called my wife to tell her I might be a little late getting to Washington. Meanwhile, the conductor was on the company telephone trying to arrange the detour.

The derailment was the work of vandals who released the hand brakes on ten freight cars in a siding near Richmond. The cars then proceeded to coast out on the mainline, crashing thru the derail and closed switch. Once on the mainline, one of them derailed and turned over. As I understood the detour problem, we had a choice: One, we could back up a mile or so, cross to a Conrail industrial track, thence thru a Conrail yard and from there hook up to the N&W; Two, we could back up a sharp incline and transfer directly to the N&W. The problem with the second plan was that we would be running backwards on the N&W. The engine would have to be coupled to the rear of the train and run backwards at greatly reduced speed. The problem with the first plan was that the conductor, or whoever was trying to make arrangements with Conrail, couldn't get thru to them--all they could get was a recording!

However, at long last permission was granted. A Conrail yardmaster advised he would meet us at the Chessie/Conrail interchange and pilot us to the N&W. About 5pm we started to back slowly down the Chessie mainline to the interchange point. There we had to pass thru several hand-thrown, very stiff switches. But at least we were moving forward. Then we moved very slowly up a steep incline and passed an old Crosby factory until we got close to the N&W. There we stopped again. We



would have to wait until 6:20pm for the N&W pilot to show up.

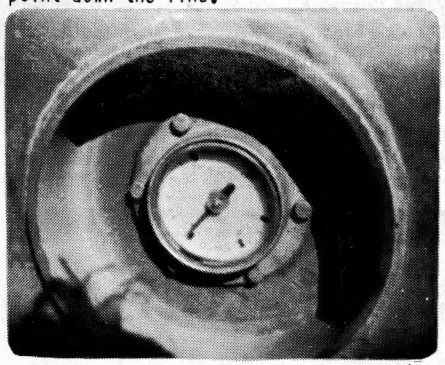
I decided to take this "break in the action" in the dining car with the hope of getting something to eat that could be eaten. The train had one tray meal to offer--the turkey dinner. I decided to have it. The attendant told me to sit down and that he would serve it to me. Further, I didn't have to pay until after I had finished. The turkey dinner wasn't bad. It was better than TV dinners from the supermarket--not as good as the old-style meals, but times have changed.

When the pilots from the N&W arrived and allowed us to proceed, we did so with gusto--we really moved. Arrival in Cincinnati was about 8:45pm. Just before we reached there, the crew came around with another surprise. There was yet another derailment up the line on the C&O and our train was going to detour on the B&O via Cumberland to get to Washington. For those who remember, that was the route of the B&O's old NATIONAL LIMITED. It's shorter than the C&O, so the crew said we might make up an hour or so by morning.

The stop in Cincinnati was very short. We backed in past the jampacked station, exchanged passengers and left. Amtrak, in an excellent move, took one of its Cincinnati ticket clerks and made him into a Passenger Service Rep. He went thru the train and contacted all the passengers destined for C&O points and advised them how Amtrak planned to take care of them. He was also able to determine that one of the roomettes was unoccupied because of a "no-show" and arranged to sell me the space. Since he couldn't accept a credit card, he decided to take my check (only requiring three forms of identification).

Five minutes after the transaction was completed, I was bedded down. Was I tired! Around 7:15am I awoke when the train came to a halt. A few minutes later a freight train went roaring by. I wondered how much time we had made up and dozed off again. Pretty soon, in that semi-conscious world between awareness and sleep, I began to notice that the train still was not moving. I turned over and dozed off again. Then I began to realize that the fan wasn't operating. This woke me up. I turned the fan switch on and off a few times and decided it wasn't working. Then I tried to turn on the lights--nothing! Now what, I thought. It was about 8am. I got up, dressed and went to the vestibule. Much to my surprise, there were 20 or 30 people milling about. We were stopped on double track in what appeared to be a level spot in some mountains. Climbing off the train, I spotted a crew member and asked what had happened. The answer was unbelievable--the train was out of fuel!

The trainman said that he and the crew had begged Baltimore to give them a helper over the mountains or to arrange to refuel the engine, but they had been refused. As the crew had predicted, Number 50 did in fact run out of fuel, and we were stuck. Remembering the freight that had passed us when I had first noticed that we were stopped, I asked why a rescue engine wasn't cut off it. The trainman said that they had asked for help, but the dispatcher said he wasn't going to stop the freight, and that we had to wait for a rescue engine from some point down the line.



(Left:) Fuel gauge registers zero. (Right:) The rescue engine. Photos by the author.

So there we were--stuck without fuel in the mountains. Not a cloud in the sky. Cool with just a light breeze. Nearby flowed a brook. I was told that just ahead, after we got thru the tunnel, we would be in an area that provided Washington DC with its water. Well, there were worse places to be stuck.

The trainman thought our rescue engine would arrive in about 40mins and that we would be in Washington between noon and 1pm. If so, I would still make my meeting.

Forty minutes came and went. Finally, at about 9:20am, B&O engine 4294 appeared. Slowly it came toward us and hooked up. Now we had to wait for air. Finally we started slowly down the mountain. At about 10:10 we reached Keyser WV. Once again we came to a halt. Then, at around 10:30 the engines cut off and slowly moved down the track. Slowly they switched over to another track and came back toward us. Slowly they passed us and continued to the fueling depot, which was out of sight. Meanwhile, the passengers who got off the train were treated to one of the B&O workers telling them, in a loud voice, that the B&O was doing everything in its power to delay the train and to inconvenience the passengers. Quite a few people believed him. It really was surprising how few people were blaming Amtrak.

We got underway at about 11:30am. Estimated time in Washington was now 2:30pm. The crew said we would really be rolling, and since we would make no station stops, we might even get in a little earlier.

Returning to my roomette, I changed into my suit, figuring I would make a dash from the depot to my meeting once we got into Washington. I was impressed with the smoothness of the ride. It wasn't until I was dressed and repacked that I looked out the window. Now wonder the ride was smooth--it looked like we were hardly moving! Checking my watch against the mileposts, I estimated 55mph--hardly what I call "rolling." I looked up the conductor and asked him what was up. It seemed that (1) we were on the wrong main due to trackwork, (2) there were a lot of slow orders due to trackwork, and (3) we were behind #440 and while we weren't making stops, #440 was, and we were riding its yellow and red blocks.

Shortly thereafter, we came to a full stop for no apparent reason. The conductor, now tired of seeing me, would not tell me what the stop was for. We were on the wrong main at the time, which meant that the rear brakeman had to go back the "full" distance (he said it was 2500 feet). When we were ready to go, he had to be whistled back. That whole process alone cost us 15mins. That was the last delay.

Shortly thereafter, we entered the correct main. Number 440 must have been so far ahead of us that we were no longer running into its signals. We finally started to really move. Amtrak offered the passengers free food and drink (except alcoholic). The ham and cheese was very good.

At about 3:30pm, No. 50, the CARDINAL of April 18, arrived in Washington. We were over 7½ hours late, a personal high for me. I missed my meeting and my boss had a few short words for me, something about if I think I'm ever going to take the train again, I had another thought coming.

I wrote Mr. J. T. Collinson, Chessie System President and CEO a letter of complaint. He sent a very kind response; I believe him. I think what happened to us was a string of bad luck and bad decisions. The Chessie System is an excellent system and its people are competent.

I have to be in Washington by 9:30am on Sept 23--that is a Thursday. Number 50 leaves Chicago on Wednesday. My current boss will have retired by then. I might well be on the CARDINAL when it leaves Union Station on Sept 22, but please let it be a short trip.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:
In issue 245, p. 20, car 20222 was described as an Amcafe; it is an Amdinette.
Issue 245, p. 21, the ex-Amtrak diner is located at the Miramar-on-the-Beach Hotel (hotel president William P. Gawzner is an RTN reader). The hotel is in Montecito, next door to Santa Barbara. Mr. Gawzner has rebuilt the old Montecito train station in the same style as the original.

# *Mixed Train of Thoughts*

AMTRAK'S SUPERLINER SLEEPERS are five short this summer: one was totally destroyed in the COAST STARLIGHT fire, another was damaged there, and three more were damaged in the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR derailment. Other Superliner cars were damaged as well in those disasters, putting the company short of Superliner equipment.....

AMTRAK FAMILY DAYS will be held in Chicago on July 17-18, in spite of the relative shortage of Superliner cars. Amtrak said it expects over 50,000 people for the event, probably the largest number ever for a Family Days weekend. It will be held at the site of the former IC station at Michigan and Roosevelt Road. The show opens to the public at noon with excursion trains runs at a "modest charge" from the display site south along ICG tracks. Employees will be able to take free train rides before noon.....

A RAILROAD STRIKE threatens the nation as we go to press, with a strike possibly beginning the morning of July 11. If President Reagan appoints an emergency board to investigate the dispute, involving the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the strike will be delayed for 60 days unless settled before then. Amtrak said that it and Conrail and the D&H should not be affected in the Northeast, and it will attempt to run its Corridor trains there if a strike begins.....

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS of Amtrak on June 30 approved spending $4 million to fence in part of the NE Corridor right-of-way, a total of 25.2 miles where trespassing and other problems are heaviest. The Board okayed the acquisition of fuel monitoring and control systems for six locomotive servicing locations, at a cost of $428,000. These will save Amtrak about $230,000 annually. The Board passed a resolution of appreciation to outgoing President Alan Boyd. New President Graham Claytor took over after the close of business on July 2.....

THE NORTH STAR, the Duluth train, has been saved again by action of the Minnesota Legislative Advisory Commission, which in late June approved spending $90,000 for the train to keep it running until some time in September. The train is undergoing an intensive advertising campaign sponsored by Amtrak and the state DOT.....

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FEDERAL BUDGET RESOLUTION was passed by Congress on June 23. This serves as a budget for now, but the actual appropriations will come later. Amtrak was put down for $758 million in the resolution, which Amtrak said is enough to fund the system at its present level and to provide for about $100 million in capital expenditures--not enough. An authorization for $788 million still stands, NARP said, and that amount could still be given Amtrak if $30 million in cuts from other programs could be found. ($654 million is needed for operations and labor protection, and the balance of the budgeted amount goes for capital expenditures.) NARP told rail supporters that they should talk to their Senators and Congressmen while the latter are home until Congress reconvenes on July 12. Rail supporters should make it clear that they know the $758 in the budget resolution is only a target figure, and that the full $788 million previously authorized should be appropriated.....

THE NEVADA DOT held a meeting in Reno on July 1 to determine the amount of interest in extending the SPIRIT OF CALIFORNIA from Sacramento to Reno.....

ALAN S. BOYD, outgoing Amtrak President, appeared on the TV program Sixty Minutes on Sunday June 27 to talk about high-speed trains.....

FINAL AEM-7 LOCOMOTIVE was to be delivered to Amtrak by July, the corporation said in late June. That locomotive, no. 932, would have been turned over to Amtrak some time ago, but it was damaged by fire before its completion.....

MIAMI TO TAMPA 403-B service is expected to begin Nov 20, Amtrak said, after completion of final details with the state of Florida. The rail corporation also noted that it has been negotiating with Louisiana over a possible new Baton Rouge to New Orleans service, which would be particularly needed for the 1984 World's Fair in New Orleans. Amtrak said that service has not yet reached the agreement stage.....

OUTGOING AMTRAK PRESIDENT Alan Boyd greeted about 1000 Amtrak employees at a farewell ceremony in Washington on June 24.....

HILTON HOTELS AND Amtrak are launching a "Sale of Two Cities" to promote traffic between the Northeast and major Eastern Canada cities this summer. The program, which will extend thru Oct 31, is based on special Amtrak and VIA Rail Canada fares, plus special rates in Hilton International Hotels. Discounted roundtrip fares are available, as well as a circle trip that includes New York, Montreal, Toronto, Niagara Falls, and intermediate points, using both Amtrak and VIA. Reduced daily hotel rates apply if a passenger shows his rail ticket when checking into the participating hotel. A concentrated newspaper and magazine ad campaign is planned in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Toronto and Montreal.....

CHICAGO UNION STATION has gotten a new sign over its entrance (photo by Jack Ferry). It took only 11 years to accomplish this! Many people often had difficulties finding the station, as it was so poorly marked..

BIG EAST CONFERENCE on July 1 named Amtrak the official transportation carrier for the 1983 basketball championship playoff which will be held in Madison Square Garden Mar 9-12, 1983. Anyone buying a package ticket for the championship series will be eligible for a special fare ticket from Amtrak on the regular trains to and from New York.....

AMTRAK NON-OPERATING UNIONS signing contracts this year now total seven, with the June 11 signing of the International Brotherhood of Firemen and Oilers' new labor agreement. New wage rates were applied on June 23 and retroactive pay increases for the period July 1, 1981 to June 22, 1982 will be paid. The union represents over 300 Amtrak powerplant stationary engineers, forklift operators and laborers. Eight unions yet to reach agreements represent 4500 Amtrak employees out of a total of about 18,000.....

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BRITISH RAILWAY STRIKE began July 4, creating mammoth transportation problems. Engineers are striking over the introduction of flexible work schedules. The government is planning to withhold the system's subsidies ($26.6 million per week) because it is not operating normal service. A strike of several weeks' duration is expected. London's subways were shut down off and on in June by strikes.....

NEW YORK'S PENN Station on Jun 29 echoed with the must of Duke Ellington's band as a 103-foot long illuminated sign promoting the hit Broadway musical "Sophisticated Ladies" was turned on the first time. The song that highlighted the event was "Take the A Train", modified to read "Take Amtrak".....

U.S. POSTAL CONTRACTS will yield Amtrak $11.5 million in 1982, and this amount is expected to reach $13.5 million next year. A recently-released government accounting office report points to future growth of surface transport of first class mail. It says that by diverting short-haul high-cost mail that is transported by air to surface transport, the Postal Service can save millions of dollars annually. Currently mostlong distance trains carry mail, and 14 daily trains in the NE Corridor...



AMERICAN AIRLINES AND Amtrak are cooperating in a new marketing venture. On Jul 6 opening ceremonies were held when an Amtrak ticket office opened for business in Chicago's Palmer House Hotel. Amtrak shares space in the American Airlines office in that hotel, and in turn American will share space in the ticket office Amtrak operates in Chicago's Radison Hotel. It's a six-month test program.....

THE COLONIAL, train 95, on Jun 26 had a round of bad luck. On the Pawcatuck River Bridge at Westerly RI it hit a 15-year old boy who was walking on the track (the boy survived but lost one leg). Reaching New York, the train coupled on private car LV-353. This delayed it a half-hour, and it was then 2hrs late. About 45 mins later, east of Trenton, it struck debris on the track, disabling the train. (The train consisted of engine 945 and 9 cars.) Passengers were transferred to trains 87 and 185. Engine 931 was sent from New York and coupled the private car to #185. Besides #95, the following trains were delayed varying amounts: 45, 225, 87, 185, 187, 173, 175, 3839, 3855. Passengers on #95 were delayed 183mins. At Washington, 32 passengers from 95 missed their connection with the CRESCENT, #19. Of these, 7 were put up in hotels, 25 received refunds, at a cost to Amtrak of over $1200. There was equipment damage to engine 945 and cars 1362 and 21063.....

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"GREAT RAILWAY JOURNEYS OF THE WORLD", a BBC TV production, is being shown on Chicago's station WTTW on 7 successive weeks starting July 1. The first program was "Coast to Coast-USA", followed by programs on Peru, India, England, Australia, and parts of the old ORIENT EXPRESS route.....

THE MULTI-STATE HIGH-SPEED Rail Compact had a chairman elected at the group's biannual meeting in Toronto in late June. He is James C. Kellogg, chief administrative officer of the Bureau of Urban and Public Transportation, Michigan DOT. He succeeds Pennsylvania State Rep. Richard A. Geist. The 5-state compact, formed in Dec 1979 by the legislatures of Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania, is exploring the development of high-speed and high-frequency rail passenger service linking major metropolitan areas within the participating states.....

NORTHEAST CORRIDOR GETS a schedule change on August 1. Among the changes at that time will be the addition of a stop at Mystic CT for train 173. This allows one-day roundtrips to Mystic from Boston and Providence, and it came about because of a suggestion from Massachusetts NARP member Charles Bahne Jr.....

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of RR Passengers is compiling a list of NARP activists in each Congressional district in the country (435 total) that NARP can contact in case a specific issue arises for which local contacts are needed.....

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UP STEAM ENGINE 3985, visiting Salt Lake City and other Utah points the weekend of Jun 26-27, made newspapers when its cinders set about 10 fires of several acres each in dry grass. About a dozen homes had to be evacuated.....

PORTUGUESE EXPRESS TRAIN, the ROCKET express from Oporto to Lisbon, derailed and hurtled off a 30-foot bridge into a shallow river on July 6. The engineer and his assistant were killed, and 34 of the 60 passengers were injured. The derailment, at Setil, was apparently caused by faulty switches.....

LOS ANGELES STATION came one step closer to being a multi-modal transportation terminal on Jun 26 when city and state officials decided to go ahead with a plan to initiate condemnation proceedings on the station. This will permit public ownership of the facility, and preservation of it. Previously, the owner railroads refused to sell it at the $18 million price offered.....

SOME GOOD PRESS has been afforded Amtrak in monthly and weekly magazines recently. With better Administration support for Amtrak, editors are finding that the rail passenger system can be spoken of in positive terms. Business Week (Jun 21 issue) carried an article titled "Amtrak gets on the right track." Quote: "Amtrak, the government-supported passenger rail network that only a year ago was on the Administration hit list, is today cannonballing ahead." And: "Administration support and rising revenues smooth the line's path." Another montly magazine carried in its July issue an article, "Amtrak: No Joke." ("On the East Coast, the trains are approaching airline standards for on-time arrivals").....

CALIFORNIA'S TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION on Jun 25 approved a 5-year plan that includes capital expenditures of $4.96 billion, $4.35 billion of which is for highways, with only $592 million to mass transit. The vote was called a defeat for Caltrans Director Adriana Gianturco. Higher transportation funds will be available next year, due to a gasoline tax increase. $1.5 million for engineering work on the L.A.-Long Beach light rail system was allocated, as were $400,000 for feasibility studies on a transit system for L.A. County.....

DELAND, FLORIDA STATION may be torn down by Amtrak; that's one of three options the corporation is considering. However, local preservationists now are hoping to deluge Amtrak with letters requesting that the station be saved.....

THE EAGLE ROUTE is actually showing ridership increases, if you allow for the fact that it's tri-weekly now. Amtrak's ridership figures compare the present patronage with the patronage of last year when it was daily (as the INTER-AMERICAN), thus guaranteeing a negative figure each month. Arkansas ARP adjusted the figures to make the number of operating days comparable, and showed that recently the monthly increases have run from 10.5 to 48.7%.....

WORLD'S LONGEST NARROW-GAUGE tunnel, a 9.5-mile tunnel in the Alps between Eastern and Western Switzerland, opened on Jun 26, on the scenic Furka-Oberwald RR.....

AMERICAN EXPRESS COMPANY'S first luxury tour from New York left there May 16, using the SILVER STAR to Washington and then the CRESCENT. Private cars used were "City of Cleveland", "Sutherland Falls" used as diner, sleepers "Flint River" and "Catawba River" and office car "Chapel Hill". "Silver Crescent" and "Silver Kettle" replaced two of the cars at New Orleans, and one sleeper was dropped.....

THE WABCO STRIKE has been settled, a fact which should speed up the delivery of Amfleet II cars from the Budd Company.....

News in this issue is updated thru July 7, 1982.

THE PANIC BOX will appear again next issue.

Amtrak
WE'RE MAKING TRAINS WORTH TRAVELING AGAIN

## QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"In much of the world, fast food has become a synonym for mediocre, mass-produced fare. But not in Japan. The tradition of the ekiben (box lunch for train travelers) survives, providing a variety of healthy and inexpensive snacks and meals for commuters, vacationers and tourists."

--Patricia Wells in New York Times, June 20.

## SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"It was the second major accident in a little more than a week involving an Amtrak train. A 12-passenger train, the San Francisco Zephyr, derailed early June 15 near Emerson, Iowa..."

--San Francisco Examiner, June 23.

(Good thing there weren't many people aboard.)

## DISASTERS (continued from page 6)

rules. The railroad said the conductor was "not working" pending the conclusion of the accident investigation. The conductor was put off duty at Dunsmuir. Amtrak said that the investigation of the disaster should be finished by mid-July.

Amtrak received very bad press in this disaster, especially since it followed by only eight days the fatal derailment of the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR in Iowa. On TV and in newspapers, passengers charged that the crew did not do enough to help passengers in the blaze, that there were no fire alarms or smoke alarms, that passengers were pretty much on their own in finding escape from the train, and that the smoke was toxic. The San Francisco Chronicle reported that the designer of the car interiors, Kevin Martin, said that the materials used were selected for their low flammability level.

Consist of the STARLIGHT was (engine nos. unknown), cars 1261, 39902, 31013, 31042, 34005, 34097, 33020, 38025, 32010, 32039.

# CARS & CONSISTS

*UP Special Train, Salt Lake-Provo Jun 26 & Provo-Salt Lake June 27: engine 3985 & tender; cars 302, 5716, open-door baggage # unknown, 5468, 5472, 5473, 6203, 5474, 5475, 5480, 5482, 6206, 5483, 5484, 5486, dome coach 7006.

*SUNSET LIMITED, train 1, New Orleans-L.A. May 28-30: engines Cotton Belt 6508 (off at San Antonio), Amtrak 705, 709; cars 1214, 39909, 32041, 32055, 38027, 31033, 34027, (Chicago-L.A.:) 39975, 32010.

*EMPIRE BUILDER, train 8-28, Spokane Jun 11: engines 366, 363; cars 20004 & 20030 (deadhead Seattle-Chicago), 1132, 39912, 34084, 34060, 38011, (from Portland: 33016, 31021, 32005), 32023, 32037.

*SILVER STAR, train 82, Winter Park FL Jun 11: engines 380, 377; cars 1271, 1628, 2454 "Redwood Grove", 2088, 25032, 25047, 25008, 4013, 8509, 3112, 25039, 25023, 25029, 2438 "Pacific Castle", private cars "City of Industry" & round-end observation "City of Pasadena".

*MONTREALER, train 61, Montreal Jun 24: engine 349; cars 1260, 2991 "Beatrice V. McDonald", slumbercoach 2051, Amdinette 20224, Amfleet II lounge-cafe 28301, 60-seat Amcoaches 21845, 21814, 21800, 21828.

## MT. SHASTA (continued from page 11)

up the Niagara Escarpment, barking and working its iron heart out until the chuffs became strained--only then did the engineer pour on the power for the bright yellow VIA diesel helper. But #25's engineer, Ray Plitz, seemed leery of overworking the steam engine. No clouds of black smoke or white smoke either--just steam from the whistle; no loud huffing and chuffing. We noticed some rough starts and stops, too.

He pulled the engine up under a working water tower, and Old Number 25 took on water (a good deal of it got sprayed on the shivering passengers as a stiff breeze was blowing right off the snowy slopes of Mt. Shasta). We climbed upward to Signal Butte Switchback, then backed over Snowman's Hill at 5000 feet, where there were some patches of snow. Then we wound our way, with steel wheels shrieking against the curves, down the 4.4% grade into Strawberry Valley, and arrived in Mt. Shasta City. We were greeted by a band and a large crowd of residents, who were celebrating Sisson Pioneer Days in the chilly spring sunshine.

After a short layover, we repeated the complicated switching and loading procedure, and began our run back to McCloud, a 32-mile roundtrip.

Class of '82 representatives, wearing striped engineer's hats, were on board each car to answer questions and to discourage enthusiastic shutterbugs from standing up on the benches while we were underway. "The insurance company doesn't want you to do that," they explained.

Mike Kissel told us that nearly every one of the 80 seniors was involved in the 4-years-in-the-planning project, but none actually did any work on the engine restoration. "Mr. Kepner and Mr. Harper wanted to do it all themselves," he told us.

We detrained in McCloud and photographed the engine as it began its afternoon run.

What does the future hold for Old Number 25 and the McCR RR? The railroad plans to allow the engine to run only on its own tracks. Rumor has it that an excursion to Burney may take place this summer. Dick Reynolds, of Great Western Tours, told us that he hopes to move some of his coaches up to McCloud for the occasion.

Railroad president Bill Herndon's future plans for the railroad include the development of trackside industrial parks in both Burney and McCloud, eventually creating more freight to be hauled. This would also provide employment opportunities in an area hard-hit by the recession. The lumber industry, around which the Northern California economy has centered, is almost at a standstill, the recent closures of lumbermills contributing to an already high unemployment rate.

For information about any future runs of Old Number 25, you may write the Mt. Shasta Chamber of Commerce, Mt. Shasta CA 96067, including a stamped, self-addressed envelope, or call between 10am and 3pm at (916) 926-4865.

The following items were omitted in error from The Panic Box of last issue (RTN 246):

3-31 SP route disrupted by highwater at Martinez CA and avalanche at Cisco CA; full report appeared in RTN 242.

3-31 Corridor train 152, with LRC #38 (see cover photo) had engine failure at Shore Line Jct; engine 205 added; delayed 62mins.

3-31 SAN JOAQUIN #709 delayed 150mins at Fresno by elec probs, engine 329.

# RAIL FANTRIPS

Jul 31: Excursion on Tuscola & Saginaw Bay Rwy, ex-NYC trackage; power: ex-D&M 466, first RS-2 built. $30 (no under-6 permitted). Tickets & info from: Steve Morse, PO Box 237, Rogers City MI 49779.

Aug 8: Western Regional RR Collectors Show & Sale, sponsor: Railroadiana Collectors Ass'n Inc. 9am-3pm, Holiday Inn of Buena Park CA, 7000 Beach Blvd. $1.50, kids 50¢. Seller's table $15. Ron Ruffulo, 495 Newhall Dr, Corona CA 91720.

Aug 28: Ex-DL&W Utica Branch between Binghamton & Utica NY now operated by Delaware Otsego lines. Info & prices: Mass. Bay RR Enthusiasts, Box 136, Ward Hill MA 01830. (617) 581-0411 7-9:30pm EDT.

Sep 11: Rails of Nostalgia-Farewell to Cable Cars; ride S.F. streetcars & cable cars (latter close for repairs Oct 1). Info from Orange Empire Rwy Museum, Box 548 Perris CA 92370; or Pacific RR Society, Box 2768, Riverside CA 92516, phone (714) 684-7458. Packages from Southern California available.

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. Send full info to:
RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

# EXPRESS ADS


VIA RAIL CANADA, AMTRAK, EURAIL PASS, 20th CENTURY RAIL TOURS - tickets and reservations - WE KNOW HOW! One call does it all. Pay by credit card or check. Tickets mailed directly to you. Contact GREAT WESTERN TOURS, masters of rail travel, Sheraton Palace Hotel, Suite 900, San Francisco 94105. (415) 398-2994.

DINING CAR CHINA, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, stationery, rules, metal & Pullman items, annual reports. Many railroads. Long stamped envelope brings list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, KS 67213. Will buy items.

ALASKA RAILWAY SPECIAL TRAIN, Anchorage to Seward and return. Sunday, September 12, 1982, leave 8:00 a.m., return 8:00 p.m. Photo stops and time for visiting in Seward. Box supper included in fare of $50.00. Pacific Railroad Society, P. O. Box 2768, Riverside CA 92516.

WHITE PASS & YUKON STEAM SPECIAL, Skagway/White Pass Summit and return with four private cars pulled by Locomotive #73. Sunday, Sept. 19, 1982, leave 8:00 a.m., return 1:30 p.m. Several photo stops. Rate of $60.00 includes box lunch. Pacific Railroad Society, P. O. Box 2768, Riverside CA 92516.

BUSES OF THE WORLD. This reference work details the builders and types in many countries worldwide. 144 pages, 160 photos, hardbound. $17.95 plus $1.00 shipping. Write for free catalog of British railway and bus books and periodicals. Inland Empire Books, P.O. Box 9523 N, Minneapolis, MN 55440.

RAILROADIANA SALE - Timetables, USRA/Conrail items, annual reports, Amtrak, misc. Send long SSAE to W. Stringer, 3950 Leland #A-19, San Diego CA 92106.

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads: only $1.25 per square inch. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.


# AMTRAK RIDERSHIP FIGURES

APR 1982 FIGURES--SECOND COLUMN IS % INCREASE/(DECREASE) OVER 1981

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| METROLINERS | 101,984 | (9.1) |
| NORTHEAST CORRIDOR CONVENTIONAL | 551,376 | 3.5 |
| PHIL-NEW HAVEN-SPRINGFIELD | 18,550 | (34.5) |
| NEW YORK-PHILADELPHIA | 165,675 | (15.0) |
| PHILADELPHIA-HARRISBURG | 71,480 | (6.3) |
| NEW YORK-HARRISBURG | 26,053 | (3.4) |
| TOTAL NORTHEAST CORRIDOR | 935,118 | (3.7) |
| NEW YORK-NIAGARA FALLS | 67,016 | (3.9) |
| CHICAGO-ST.LOUIS | 24,863 | (1.6) |
| CHICAGO-MILWAUKEE | 12,477 | (56.9) |
| CHICAGO-DETROIT/TOLEDO | 34,969 | (23.7) |
| CHICAGO-CARBONDALE | 14,571 | (5.3) |
| CHICAGO-QUINCY | 6,264 | (21.7) |
| LOS ANGELES-SAN DIEGO | 108,915 | 2.3 |
| SEATTLE-EUGENE | 4,847 | (34.9) |
| VANCOUVER-SEATTLE | | (100.0) |
| WASHINGTON-CINCINNATI | | (100.0) |
| WASHINGTON-MARTINSBURG | 17,927 | (18.3) |
| OAKLAND-BAKERSFIELD | 17,547 | 18.9 |
| NEW YORK-MONTREAL | 5,842 | (1.1) |
| CHICAGO-PORT HURON | 9,176 | (16.8) |
| CHICAGO-DUBUQUE | | (100.0) |
| CHICAGO-DULUTH | 4,197 | (72.4) |
| CHICAGO-VALPARAISO | 23,615 | 19.1 |
| CHICAGO-INDIANAPOLIS | 4,722 | (37.0) |
| CHICAGO-PEORIA | | (100.0) |
| CHICAGO-KANSAS CITY | 12,345 | .3 |
| PHILADELPHIA-PITTSBURGH | 8,062 | 13.7 |
| PORTLAND-EUGENE | | (100.0) |
| LOS ANGELES-SACRAMENTO | 8,841 | .0 |
| TOTAL SHORT DISTANCE | 386,196 | (15.5) |
| WASHINGTON-MONTREAL | 10,883 | (26.4) |
| NEW YORK-FLORIDA | 66,866 | (8.1) |
| CHICAGO-NEW YORK/WASHINGTON | 21,766 | (15.3) |
| CHICAGO-CINCINNATI-WASHINGTON | 8,668 | (43.9) |
| CHICAGO-SEATTLE (N) | 28,068 | 13.1 |
| CHICAGO-SAN FRANCISCO | 22,960 | (27.5) |
| CHICAGO-LOS ANGELES | 21,684 | (24.9) |
| CHICAGO-NEW ORLEANS | 19,251 | (4.5) |
| CHICAGO-TEXAS | 6,858 | (64.0) |
| LOS ANGELES-NEW ORLEANS | 6,695 | (22.3) |
| LOS ANGELES-SEATTLE | 37,587 | (29.6) |
| CHICAGO-NEW YORK/BOSTON | 27,365 | (17.3) |
| BOSTON-NEWPORT NEWS | 8,008 | 2.4 |
| NEW YORK-SAVANNAH | 16,903 | 11.8 |
| SEATTLE-SALT LAKE CTY/CHI | 11,250 | (25.0) |
| NEW YORK-NEW ORLEANS | 23,357 | (5.5) |
| LOS ANGELES/OGDEN-CHI | 10,598 | (21.3) |
| TOTAL LONG DISTANCE | 348,767 | (17.8) |

These are the latest ridership figures released by Amtrak, for April. The March figures appeared last issue.

Total systemwide ridership in April was 1,675,525--down 9.8% from April, 1981. Ridership of special trains in April was 5,444--up 30.2% from April, 1981.

Comparing the March figures published last issue, the dropoff in patronage, due mainly to the recession, was more severe in April. Each category of travel was down more sharply than in March, again with the NE Corridor having the best relative showing, with only a 3.7% drop.

The blanks in the ridership column for short distance indicate trains that were discontinued last fall. RTN calculates that if these were still running, short distance ridership would be down only 8% instead of 15.5%. Note that onevery bright spot in short distance travel was the Oakland-Bakersfield SAN JOAQUIN, showing an 18.9% increase because of its connecting buses and improved twice-daily roundtrips.